

**Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services –
The Impact of Trauma on Law Enforcement Officers Conference
Roanoke, Virginia, September 9-10, 2020**

***Officer Support Following Critical Incidents and Traumatic Events*
by Sgt. Brian Casey**



Outline and Note Page

- **Introduction**

- *Psychological Trauma*
 - Events are not traumatic until we experience them as traumatic
 - Defined
 - “An event that overwhelms an officer’s ability to cope”
 - Coping Resources
 - Individual (internal)
 - Group (external)
- Cops are Smart

- **1. Psychological Trauma**

- *3 Columns of Officer Distress*
 - Critical Incidents and Traumatic Events
 - General Mental and Emotional Distress
 - Behavioral Health Crisis
- Big “T” and Little “t” Trauma
- How the Brain Works
 - Human Brain
 - Animal Brain
- Impact of Psychological Trauma
 - Who
 - What
 - Surprise
 - Gore
 - Innocence
 - Too much too soon
 - Timeline

- **2. Critical Incidents and Traumatic Events**
 - Define and Contrast
 - Critical Incident, *In-custody or enforcement action resulting in high probability of death, or death*
 - Traumatic Event, *“Bad Call”*
 - Law Enforcement-Specific Issues
 - General Response
 - Recognize potentially traumatic events
 - Encourage supervisors, coworkers or peer support team members to check on those potentially impacted
 - Consider (as needed):
 - Refer to therapist skilled in psychological trauma
 - Organize a debriefing possibly utilizing regional CISM team
 - Critical Incident
 - Agency Response
 - Monitoring officer assigned
 - Pre-EOT EAP check-in
 - One-on-one therapeutic check-in before returning to work
 - Group debrief
 - One-on-one therapeutic check-in follow-up
 - Traumatic Event
 - Agency Response
 - Option A: *See Critical Incident response*
 - Option B: Do nothing
 - Option C: Supervisor outreach
 - Option D: EAP/Peer Support outreach (phone follow-up)
 - Potential Traumatic Event - Response
 - Supervisor, Senior Officer, Peer Support, Co-worker Role
 - *CopThought* videos (www.GoodCopGoodCop.com)
 - Peer Support Traumatic Event Outreach
- **3. Post-Traumatic Stress Recovery**
 - Shielding
 - Before
 - During
 - After
 - Protective Factors
 - Post-Traumatic Growth